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Erie County's new drop box for mailed ballots, located outside the Erie County Courthouse on West Sixth Street. [KEVIN FLOWER/TIMES-NEWS]

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way to use Pennsylvania's new mail-in ballot option without having to worry about any mail delays.

"This drop-box will add another level of accessibility and reliability for voters concerned about going to the polls during the coronavirus emergency," Boockvar said.

The Erie County Courthouse also will be open to the public from May 20 to May 26 so voters may apply for absentee or mail-in ballots and vote in person at the county's Voter Registration Office, located in Room 112 on the courthouse's first floor.

Hours of operation will be announced later, and no other areas of the courthouse will accessible on those days.

County Election Board Chairman and Erie County Councilman Carl Anderson said the drop box "will be a vital service for voters so they can get their ballot returned on time."

For information, call 451-6275.

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New ballot drop box available outside Erie County Courthouse

By Kevin Flowers

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Erie County is believed to be the first Pennsylvania county to put a drop box in place for mailed ballots.

There is a new drop-off box for mail-in and absentee ballots outside the Erie County Courthouse, 140 West Sixth St.

Erie County is believed to be the first Pennsylvania county to put a drop box in place for mailed ballots, according to the county's Board of Elections.

Voters can now drop off their completed ballots, at any time of day, seven days a week. The box is located near the courthouse's main entrance off West Sixth Street.

The county purchased the box in the wake of Act 77, which Governor Wolf signed into law in 2019. That new election law created the option of mail-in ballots with no excuse needed, along with later deadlines for voter registration and for returning mail-in and absentee ballots.

Roughly one million Pennsylvanians have applied for mail-in ballots for the June 2 primary.

According to county officials, Erie County has received nearly 20,000 applications for ballots by mail for the primary, which is four times greater than 2016 primary, the last one to feature a presidential race.

Pennsylvania Secretary of State Kathy Boockvar said in a statement: "I applaud Erie County for setting up this secure and convenient drop-box for mail-in ballots in front of their courthouse. I'm sure voters will find this an easy and safe